

## Community resources

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*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 08BOGOTA4372, POSSIBLE URIBE REELECTION IN 2010 INCREASINGLY

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08BOGOTA4372**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">08BOGOTA4372</a>	<a href="#">2008-12-10 21:12</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Bogota</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.semana.com/wikileaks/Seccion/168.aspx>

VZCZCXYZ0005  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #4372/01 3452112  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 102112Z DEC 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5991  
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1406  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ DEC 9818  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 6814  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 2759  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 7506  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL PRIORITY 4711  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDTA/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1960

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date: 12/10/2008 21:12  
refid: 08BOGOTA4372  
origin: Embassy Bogota  
classification: CONFIDENTIAL  
destination:  
header:  
VZCZCXYZ0005

PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #4372/01 3452112  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 102112Z DEC 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5991  
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1406  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ DEC 9818  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 6814  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 2759  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 7506  
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDTA/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1960

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 004372

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/10/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [CO](#)

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE URIBE REELECTION IN 2010 INCREASINGLY  
UNLIKELY AS CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE IS POSTPONED UNTIL 2009

¶1. (C) Summary: Prospects for a possible third term for President Uribe in 2010 look increasingly unlikely. Congress announced it would delay further debate on the bill that could permit Uribe to run again in 2010 until March 2009, and key Uribista supporters have publicly dismissed the 2010 option. Interior and Justice Minister Fabio Valencia Cossio urged Congress to reconsider the delay, but with the current congressional session ending on December 16, time is running out. Uribe told visiting FBI Director Robert Mueller that he no longer sees the possibility of running in 2010, but would like to keep open the option of a constitutional reform that would let him run in 2014. Meanwhile, the driver of the 2010 referendum initiative--Senator Luis Giraldo--resigned as U Party Secretary General amid a growing controversy over the financing of the referendum initiative. End Summary.

President's Allies Raise Concerns

¶2. (C) In separate interviews on December 5-8, 2008, high-profile supporters of President Uribe rejected the effort to amend the Constitution to allow Uribe to run again in 2010 and questioned the tactics used by amendment advocates. In an interview on December 5, Fabio Echeverri Correa, Uribe's campaign manager in the 2002 and 2006 presidential elections, said the "referendum lacks legitimacy" and urged Uribe to defer any reelection possibilities until 2014. On December 7, Luis Alberto Moreno, President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and Uribe's first Ambassador to the United States, said a third term would not be good for the country or for Uribe. Uribe told FBI director Robert Mueller on December 9 that he no longer sees the possibility of running in 2010, but does not want to close the door on a possible 2014 bid.

New Problems Arise Over Referendum

¶3. (C) In early December, new questions arose over funding for the referendum petition. Echeverri voiced concern that Senator Luis Guillermo Giraldo, who has managed the reelection effort, has been unable to explain who provided 1.9 billion pesos (835,000 USD) in financing for the referendum petition, well over the legal limit of 335 million pesos (147,000 USD). Several observers allege that public contractors illegally channeled contributions through a private foundation, which subsequently "lent" the funds to

the referendum effort. Echeverri told us privately that Giraldo is an "opportunist" who has been tied to numerous financial scandals. Publicly, Echeverri said the doubts over the initiative's funding put the legitimacy of the whole referendum process in question.

#### Giraldo Holds U Party Line, But Resigns

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¶4. (U) In a December 8 interview, Giraldo defended the initiative's funding and publicly disputed claims of irregularities in the collection of signatures. Still, Giraldo failed to clarify the sources of the funding used to promote the referendum initiative, and--in the face of growing criticism--resigned on December 9 from his post as Secretary General of the U Party. The National Electoral Advisor (CNE) continues its preliminary inquiry to establish if the supporters of the referendum did anything irregular or illegal in the collection of signatures for approval of the referendum and/or in its financing.

#### Referendum Postponed Until March 2009

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¶5. (U) House President German Varon announced on December 9 that Congress would delay the second debate on the referendum bill until the next session of Congress in March, 2009. He said this was to ensure that other priority legislation--such as the Victims and Political Reform bills--received adequate attention. Interior and Justice Minister Fabio Valencia urged Congress not to delay consideration of the referendum, but appeared to have little support. Giraldo claimed that postponement of congressional consideration of the referendum until March would condemn it to a "slow death." It would be

hard to complete the required three congressional votes, Constitutional Court review, and referendum in time to allow Uribe to run in 2010. Under current law, a president must legally declare his intention to seek reelection six months before the election (which would require Uribe to declare in November 2009).

¶6. (C) Varon's party, Cambio Radical, and some other Uribista legislators oppose allowing Uribe to run again in 2010, and have cooperated with opposition efforts to stall or derail the bill. House Secretary General Jesus Rodriguez told us that many members of Congress remain concerned over Uribe's failure to take a public stance in favor of reelection. They are also troubled by the doubts surrounding the referendum's funding. Congressmen Tarquino Pacheco called Valencia's call for Congress to consider the referendum bill in the current legislative session a clear signal of Uribe's support for the referendum, but it is unclear how many other legislators will agree.

NICHOLS

=====CABLE ENDS=====